

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 9, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Mike Troutman, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:** Kaytee Faris                      Mike Troutman  
Jim Hopkins                      Kim Tuck  
Bruce Phillips

**Members Excused:** Susan Baldwin (Liaison)

**Staff Present:** Marcel Stoetzel, Assistant City Attorney  
Glenn Perian, Senior Planner, Planning Dept.  
Leona Parrish, Admin. Assistant, Planning Dept.

**ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA:** None

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRUCE PHILLIPS TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR  
THE JANUARY 12, 2015 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING AS  
PRESENTED, SECONDED BY MR. DANIEL BUSCHER.**

**ALL IN FAVOR; NONE OPPOSED; MINUTES APPROVED**

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A) **51 W. Michigan Avenue** - *(Request from Mr. James Donahue (Tenant) requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a new projection sign for "Battle Creek Books" new business.)*

Mr. Donahue was not present to speak. Mr. Glenn Perian stated this application request was for a projection sign only and that the awning had been previously approved a few years ago. Said the projection sign would be installed over the top of the awning and meets the requirement criteria for the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines and staff recommends approval.

Mr. Jim Hopkins asked if the awning goes the length of the windows or just over the door. Mr. Perian stated yes it would be the length of the windows.

***With no others wishing to speak, Mr. Troutman asked commissioners for a motion.***

**MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BRUCE PHILLIPS TO APPROVE THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO INSTALL A NEW PROJECTION SIGN FOR “BATTLE CREEK BOOKS” PROPERTY LOCATED AT 51 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE, PURSUANT TO HOUSING CODE CHAPTER 1470.09 “REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS” AND 1470.17 “PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC FEATURES” AND THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT; SECONDED BY MR. KIM TUCK.**

**ALL IN FAVOR; NONE OPPOSED; MOTION APPROVED**

**(B) 70 Walter Avenue - *(Request from City of Battle Creek, Mr. Dennis McKinley on behalf of Calhoun County Land Bank Authority (owner), for a Notice to Proceed to demolish residential structure.)***

Mr. Glenn Perian, Senior Planner, Planning Dept. stated this application for a Notice to Proceed was submitted by City of Battle Creek, Mr. Dennis McKinley to demolish the structure at 70 Walter Ave. and that included in the meeting packet was an estimated repair cost of \$52,000 dollars and the SUV was roughly \$7,000 dollars; said the Calhoun County Land Bank wished to demolish and that this property is a non-contributing building and has been vacant since the year 2010.

Mr. Kim Tuck asked if the city staff has been inside to inspect. Mr. Perian stated he had not been inside and was not sure if the building inspector had been inside; said the cost estimate document stated it was a building inspection only.

Ms. Amy Rose Wallace-Robinson, Calhoun County Land Bank Authority was present to speak. Stated the Calhoun County had not been inside this structure but that Mr. Don Wilkinson, City of Battle Creek Building Inspector had done the inspection of the property and his cost estimate of repair was included with their application request along with photos.

Mr. Mike Troutman asked why the County Land Bank wanted to demolish this property. Ms. Wallace-Robinson stated they have invested several amount of funds in this neighborhood and want to remove blight from the neighborhood and was in part with the City of Battle Creek. Said they had demolished seven homes for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program #2 to improve this area as well as provide three lots and/or homes for Grace Health Systems that is in the vicinity. Ms. Wallace-Robinson said it would be a joint effort between the City of Battle Creek and the Calhoun County Land Bank that would be removing this structure as a piece of blight.

Mr. Troutman asked what happens to the vacant lot. Ms. Wallace-Robinson said they would try to offer to the adjacent land owner if they do not have any back taxes or current code violations and sometimes the neighborhood use vacant lots for a pocket park or neighborhood garden.

Mr. Dan Buscher asked Mr. Glenn Perian what was his opinion. Mr. Perian stated he believes that eliminating some of these vacant and abandoned structures are in the best interest of the city to eliminate blight in those areas and think it has been a city wide effort for some time in hopes to improve the neighborhoods overall; said no one seems to take an interest in investing monies into this type of properties.

Mr. Bruce Phillips asked if Neighborhoods Incorporated is no longer doing any rehab projects. Ms. Wallace-Robinson stated NIBC, City of Battle Creek, Calhoun County and Battle Creek Housing Commission have all invested funds in this neighborhood and yet this is one property based on the fact the cost of repair exceeds any source of return on the sale of this property and is not feasible.

Mr. Bruce Phillips asked if this inspection and cost estimate was done by an inspector going inside the property or just the exterior. Ms. Wallace-Robinson stated she has only the Cost Estimate Repair sheet that was provided for the staff report.

Mr. Kim Tuck stated there is significant issues present in the photos and when he drove by the structure it only has a 60 amps service and the siding and trim has been poorly installed with some missing with missing windows also would cost \$15,000 to \$20,000 dollars to bring up to current standards for just the exterior.

Mr. Dan Buscher asked what the target number was for properties to be demolished in this neighborhood. Ms. Wallace-Robinson stated the Land Bank have done the properties around Claude Evans Park and Grace Health area where the city has invested a lot of monies. Said they would prefer to rehabilitate any that are on the historic register; feel this one is not in a good area and they do not think they could sell.

Mr. Kim Tuck stated in the years past Neighborhoods Incorporated had addressed the homes within that neighborhood by building some new homes and rehabilitating some. Said with this one on the south-side of the block is a remnant of those targeted homes that had been done.

Mr. Kim Tuck asked if Habitat for Humanity had been involved in any discussion regarding this property. Ms. Wallace-Robinson said at this point they have not.

Mr. Mike Troutman asked how many years this property has been vacant. Ms. Wallace-Robinson stated it had been vacant for four-years and that no one had come forward to purchase.

*With no others wishing to speak, Mr. Troutman asked commissioners for a motion.*

**MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. DANIEL BUSCHER FOR A NOTICE TO PROCEED TO DEMOLISH THIS PROPERTY LOCATED AT 70 WALTER AVENUE, AS IT MEETS THE CRITERIA AND STANDARDS OUTLINED IN CHAPTER 1470.09(e) OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES, AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT; SECONDED BY MR. BRUCE PHILLIPS.**

**ALL IN FAVOR; NONE OPPOSED; MOTION APPROVED**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF:**

Mr. Perian stated there was still one seat available for a new member on the Historic District Commission and that Ms. Christine Zuzga, Planning Manager is working with the Mayor to fill that seat.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Mike Troutman, adjourned the meeting at 4:20 P.M.

Submitted by: Leona A. Parrish, Administrative Assistant, Planning Department